

REVIEWS

Essai sur les Alterations du Cortex dans les Meningites Aigues. By PIERRE THOMAS. (Paris, J. B. Bailliere et Fils, 19, Rue Hautefeuille.)

IN this work the author maintains that in acute meningitis of specific infective origin, all the layers of the cortex are affected. The first elements to show any lesion are the larger and more highly specialised cortical cells. These show alterations before any change can be detected in the vessels, and with an intensity which appears to be in relation to the infectivity of the cause, the duration of the infection and, apparently, the size of the elements themselves. The stages of such changes are, first, alteration in position, then of the shape, of the nucleus, pericellular infiltration, intra-cellular infiltration, and, lastly, destruction of the element. Judging from the cases observed by the author, neuroglial changes are secondary and appear slowly. The symptoms due to these lesions, be they exaggeration or diminution of neuron function, are delirium, motor symptoms, disorders of speech, coma, and alteration of sensation. In the opinion of the author, the lesions which he describes begin in the gray matter, and extend to the vessels and meninges. He believes that the rôle of the vessels has been considerably exaggerated, if not misunderstood. In other words, he regards the presence of specific diseases, such as pneumonia and tubercle, as having a selective effect on the large and other pyramidal cells of the cortex.

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